ABSTRACT

A method and system for managing the changing of software implementations such as applications deployed to users in an enterprise. Precedence relationships between any of the applications deployed in an enterprise are specified. To determine the actual set of applications that should be installed for a given client user or client machine, the precedence is applied to the subset of applications that are assigned or published to the client. To this end, at logon or machine reboot, an upgrade process walks through the deployed applications and evaluates the upgrade relationships therebetween, setting applications for removal or installation as appropriate. A user may also install an application that has been designated as optional for that user. The method and system facilitate the use of application lifecycles, a model for replacing applications with either new or updated applications. For example, administrators can phase in upgrades first as a pilot to a small group of users, roll out upgrades to a larger group, and then provide the application to all users. The upgrade may be mandatory or optional, while the programs that are being replaced may be removed and them replaced, or overlaid by installing the new application over the old. Other applications may simply be removed without replacing, while others may optionally remain but be non-supported.